

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 4, 7 - 26, and 29 - 43 are pending. Claims 5-6 and 27-28 have been previously cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 26 and 39 have been amended. Claim 12 is amended to correct an obvious typographical error. Claim 26 is now amended to depend from claim 21. As further discussed below, support for the other claim amendments made is provided in the specification originally filed. Accordingly, no new matter is introduced.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 14-18, 21-26, and 29-30 represent allowable subject matter as noted at page 8 of the Final Office Action.

In response, Applicants have amended base claims 14, 16, 18 and 21 by re-writing them in independent form as noted in the **Listing of the Claims** section of this paper. As noted, claim 26 is amended to depend from claim 21.

Thus, these claims (claims 14, 16, 18, and 21) and claims depending therefrom (claim 15 depending from claim 14; claim 17 depending from claim 16; claims 22-26 and 29-30 ultimately depending from claim 21) are each now presented in allowable format.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of each of claims 14-18, 21-26 and 29-30 pursuant to the “*Allowable Subject Matter*” paragraph appearing at the bottom of page 8 of the Final Office Action.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for confirming that no First Office Action Final Rejection shall be issued.

Claim Objections

Applicants acknowledge withdrawal of all prior objections of record as noted at page 2 of the Final Office Action.

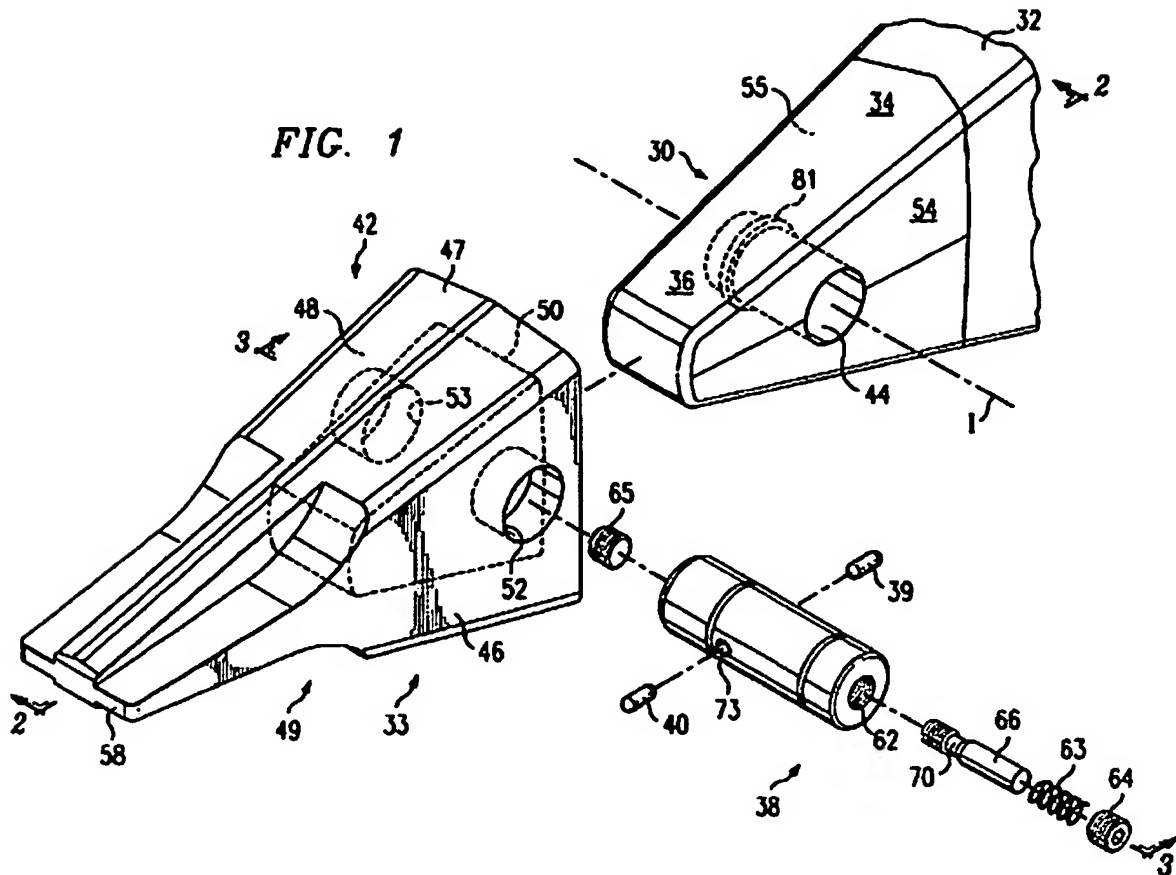
Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Applicants further acknowledge withdrawal of all prior rejections (under 35 U.S.C. § 112) of record as indicated at page 2 of the Office Action.

Telephonic Interview with Examiner

Applicants also thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to the undersigned during the extended telephonic interview of Monday, February 9, 2009 in connection with the claimed invention. The telephonic discussion revolved around U.S. Pat. No. 6,757,995 to Pippins (hereinafter “Pippins”). In particular, the point(s) discussed were that the Final Office Action (arguably) equated the cylindrical valve (66) of Pippins to Applicants’ “rotatable locking pin” and further (arguably) equated the narrow neck portion (70) (of cylindrical valve (66) of Pippins) to the “formations” (of Applicants’ “rotatable

locking pin"). (Emphasis added.) The foregoing parts (of the Pippins' apparatus) are readily visible in Figure 1 thereof reproduced below for convenience:



Additional points discussed were that the Final Office Action (arguably) equated the hollow "retainer pin" (38) of Pippins to Applicants' "retaining element." (Emphasis added.) Also, discussed was that the Final Office Action (arguably) equated Pippins' free-floating detents (39, 40) to Applicants' "engaging formations."

The point(s) further discussed were that detents (39) and (40) (of Pippins) are in effect "free-floating" as is readily seen when comparing Fig. 1 of Pippins to Figure 3 of Pippins. In Figures 1 and 3 of Pippins, detents (39) and (40) which may originally rest on narrow neck portion (70) of cylindrical valve (66) can slide up the (un-numbered) slanted shoulder of the same cylindrical valve (66) to then be able to partially occupy notched openings (78) and (79) through cavities (72) and (73) by resting one of the detent free-floating ends on the larger diameter portion of cylindrical valve (66). Such configuration is readily visualized in Figure 3 of Pippins reproduced below for convenience:

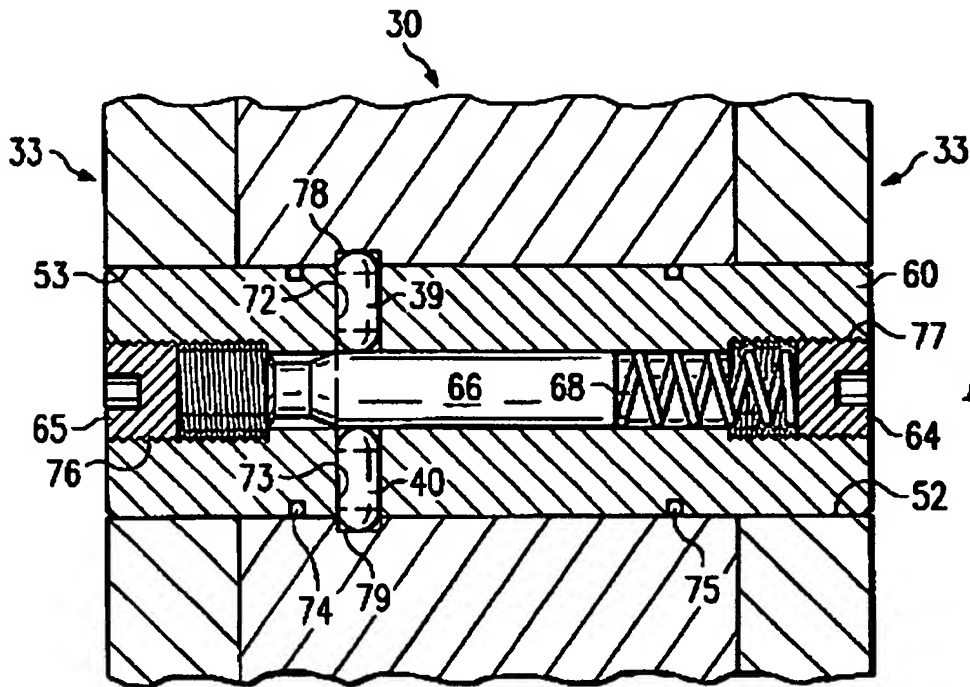


FIG. 3

The other free-floating end of detents (39) and (40) occupies notches (78) and (79) as shown above. The foregoing operation of free-floating detents (39) and (40) of Pippins is so described therein as reproduced below:

In the illustrated embodiment, reduced diameter neck 70 comprises a circumferential groove extending along the perimeter of valve 66. [(Pippins at col. 4, lines 44-46; underlining emphasis added.)]

* * *

Valve 66 has a generally uniform thickness (diameter) over its entire length, except for a reduced diameter neck 70 disposed between opposing ends of valve 66. The diameter of valve 66 is configured such that detents 39 and 40 are maintained in an extended position, when detents 39 and 40 contact valve 66 at a location other than reduced diameter neck 70. [(Pippins at col. 4, lines 33-39; underlining emphasis added.)]

* * *

Reduced diameter neck 70 is sized such that detents 39 and 40 may be at least partially received within the slot formed by reduced diameter neck 70, so that retainer pin 38 may be removed from adapter 30, in order to decouple adapter 30 and removable tooth 33. [(Pippins at col. 4, lines 39-43; underlining emphasis added.)]

In other words, because of the requisite “free-floating” nature of detents (39) and (40) relative to the lateral movement (*i.e.*, from left to right along the central horizontal long axis of valve (66) in the orientation as depicted in Figure 3 of Pippins) of cylindrical valve (66), detents (39) and (40) can be extended into notches (78) and (79) (as depicted in Figure 3 of Pippins) or can be withdrawn out of notches (78) and (79) when resting on neck portion (70) of valve (66). See Figures 1 and 3 of Pippins reproduced above together with the operation of valve (66) described in Pippins also reproduced above.

In contrast, the “formations” and the “engaging formations” of Applicants’ rejected claims are not “free-floating” relative to movement of the “locking pin” or relative to movement of the “retaining element” to which they are respectively attached. For example, if the “rotatable locking pin” were oriented in a vertical up and down direction (see Applicants’ Figure 1 reproduced herein), then as the “rotatable locking pin” is moved up and down along its long central axis, its attached “formations” move along with the pin in the same up and down vertical direction. The same would be true of the retaining element and its respective attached “engaging formations.” (Emphasis added.)

An illustrative non-limiting depiction of the above-noted “attached formations” of the “rotatable locking pin” is shown in Figures 1 and 3 of Applicants’ specification reproduced below wherein numeral 12 refers to the locking pin and numerals 22 refer to its attached formations. In the same illustrative non-limiting depictions of Applicants’ Figures 1 and 3, numeral 15 refers to the retaining element and numerals 20 refer to its attached engaging formations. See Applicants’ Figures 1 and 3 reproduced below:

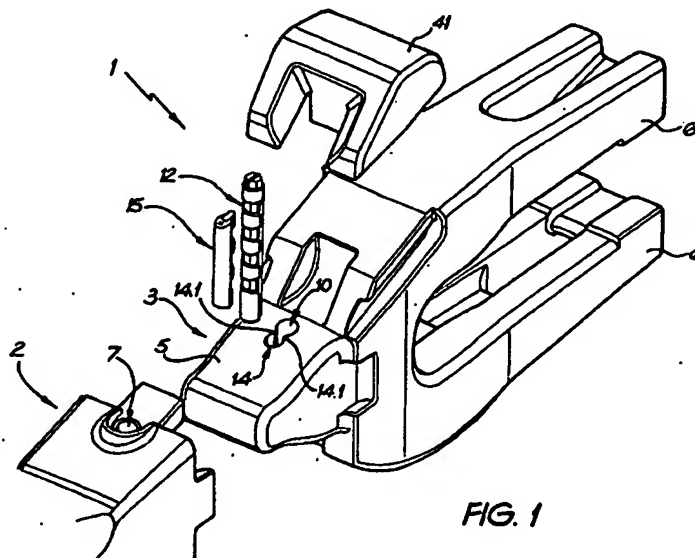
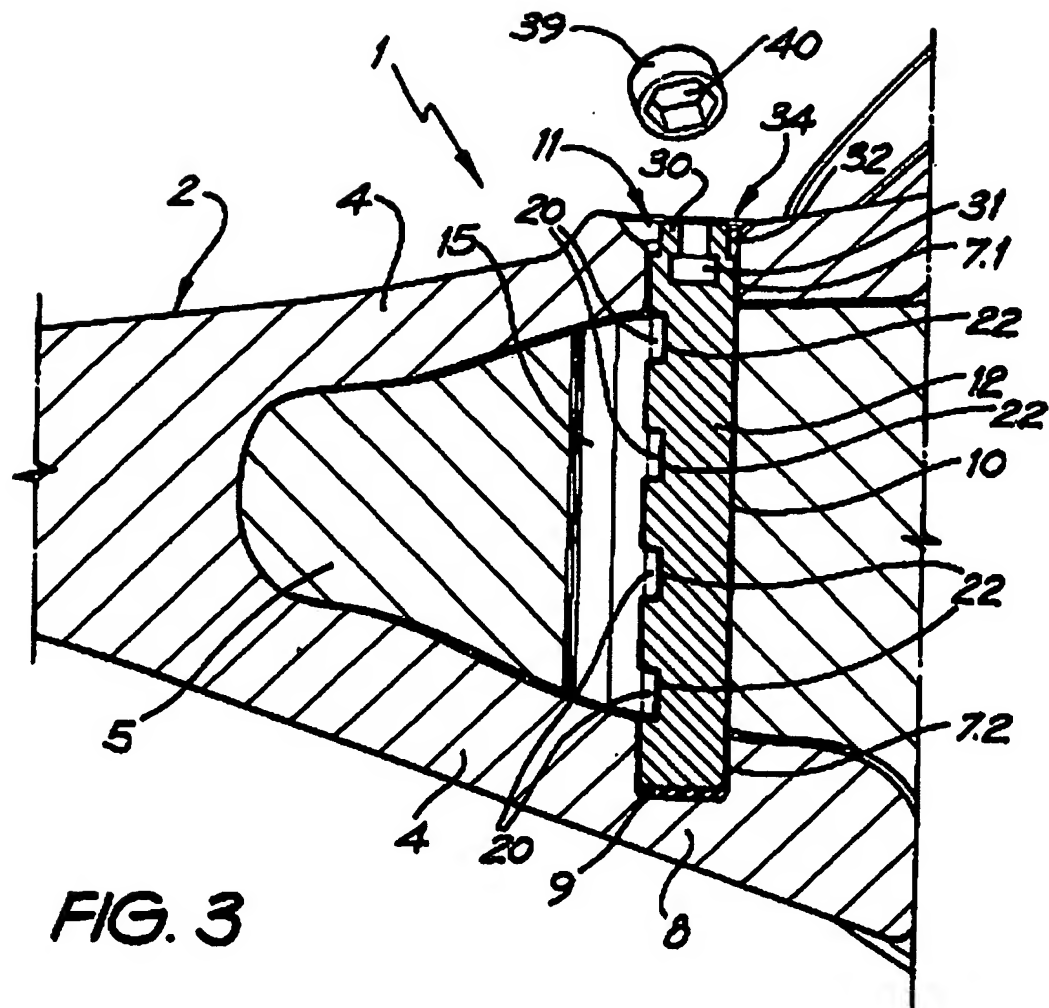
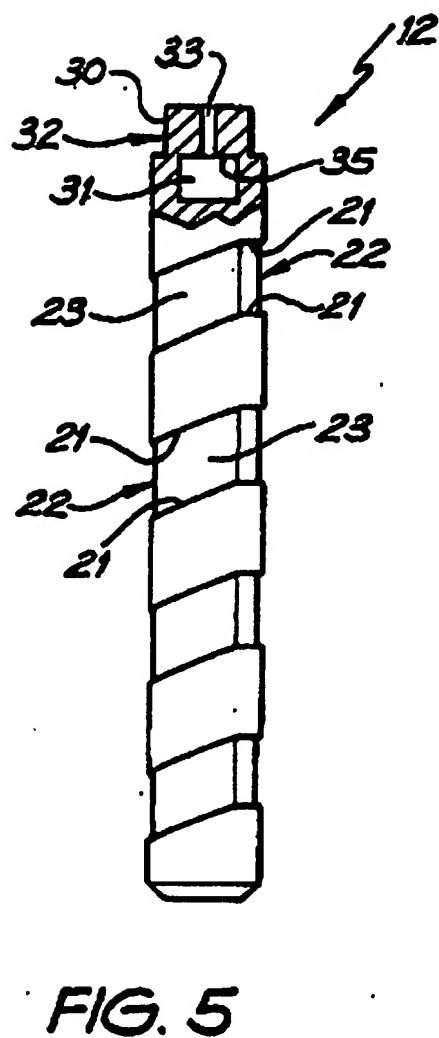
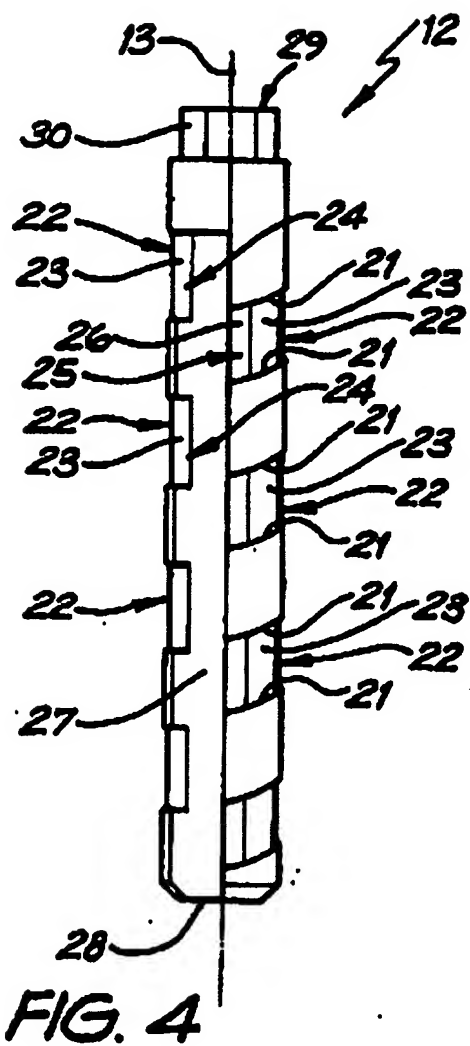


FIG. 1



Similar illustrative non-limiting depictions of attached “formations” are shown in Applicants’ Figures 4, 5, 10, and 11 wherein numeral 12 refers to the locking pin and numeral 22 refers to its attached formations. For convenience, these Figures are reproduced below:



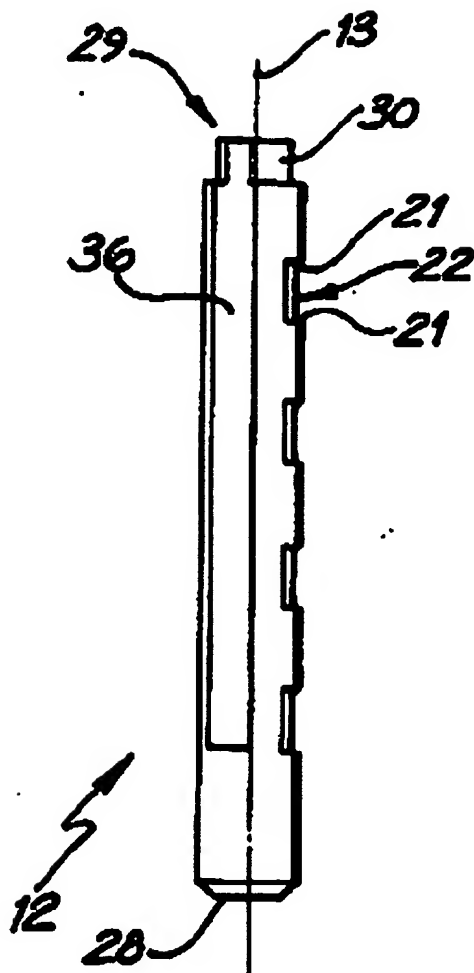


FIG. 10

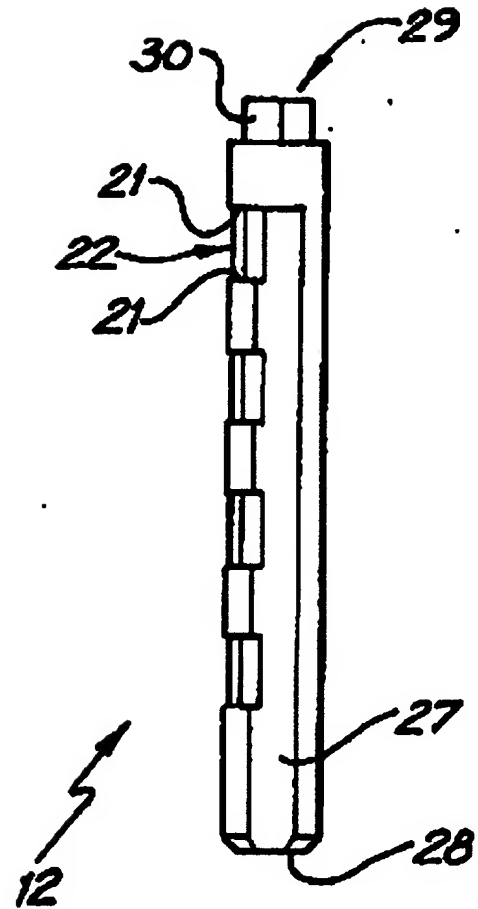
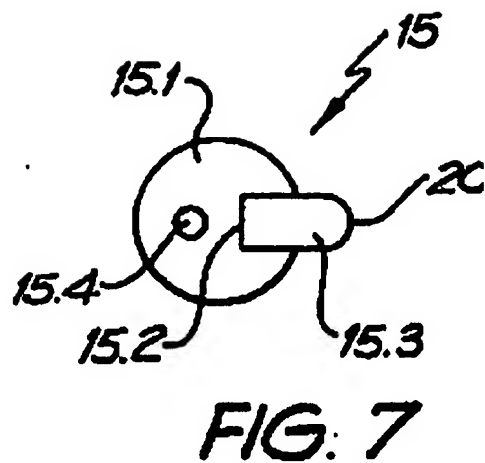
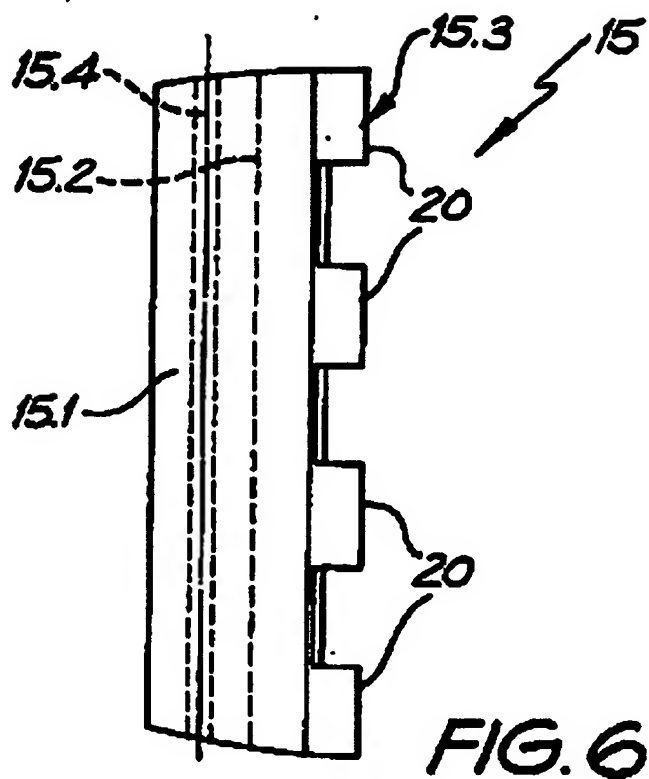


FIG. 11

Similar illustrative non-limiting depictions of attached engaging formations are shown in Applicants' Figures 6, 7, 8, and 9 wherein numeral 15 refers to the retaining element and numeral 20 refers to its attached engaging formations. For convenience, these Figures are reproduced below:



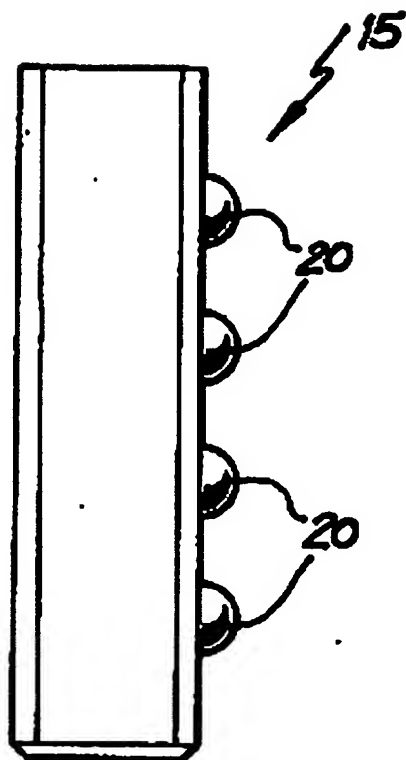


FIG. 8

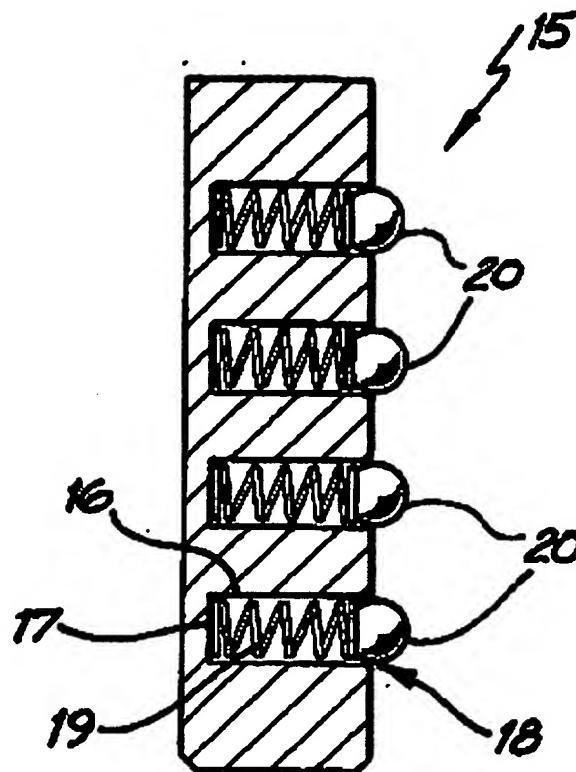


FIG. 9

In view of the above discussion and foregoing support for the attached formations and attached engaging formations, Applicants discussed amending claim 1 to recite “attached formations” and “attached engaging formations” which clearly are not “free-floating” as are the detents (39) and (40) of Pippins (relative to the lateral motion of Pippins’ cylindrical valve (66)) already discussed above. Applicants discussed amending claim 39 in similar fashion.

By amending claim 1 and claim 39 in such fashion does not introduce new matter in view of the support for the “attached” features of the formations and the “attached” features of the engaging formations noted above by way of illustrative non-limiting examples.

Amended Claims 1, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 26 and 39

Claims 1, 12, 14, 16, 18, 21, 26, and 39 have been amended as indicated in the **Listing of the Claims** section of this paper. As already noted, no new matter is introduced by amending these claims.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)(1) Over Pippins

Claims 1-4, 7-13, 19-20, and 31-43 are rejected as being anticipated by Pippins under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)(1) for the reasons noted at pages 3-8 of the Office Action. While Applicants respectfully disagree

with the grounds of rejection, to expedite prosecution Applicants have amended certain claims to overcome the rejections of record.

In particular, Applicants have amended independent claims 1 (and thereby its ultimate dependent claims 2-4, 7-13, 19-20 and 31-38) and 39 (and thereby its dependent claim 40) to recite “attached formations” of the “rotatable locking pin” and “attached engaging formations” of the “retaining element” not disclosed or taught by Pippins. Applicants’ above-noted remarks regarding the deficiencies of Pippins are incorporated and applied herein by reference without having to repeat the same.

Furthermore, it is noted that rejected claims 41-43 depend from claim 26. However, claim 26 is now amended to depend from allowable claim 21. Therefore, by virtue of such amendment, claims 41-43 now also depend ultimately from allowable claim 21. Accordingly, the issue of the rejection of claims 41-43 is now moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of record of claims 1-4, 7-13, 19-20 and 31-43 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)(1) over Pippins.

In view of the foregoing claim amendments and the telephonic conference with the Examiner regarding the “free-floating” nature of Pippins’ detents (39) and (40) discussed above, Applicants respectfully request acknowledgement that Applicants’ rejected claims 1-4, 7-13, 19-20 and 31-43 are patentably distinguished over the Pippins reference.

Applicants therefore respectfully request allowance of these claims together with allowance of the claims the Examiner has already indicated as allowable subject matter.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a written indication of the same is earnestly solicited.

If any issues remain to be resolved, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney so that any remaining issues (if any) may be promptly resolved to secure allowance of the subject application.

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Attachments:

Credit Card Payment Authorization form
Request for Continued Examination
Fee Transmittal Sheet

Respectfully submitted,

By: Ajay Pathak 2/12/2009
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